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ABSTRACT

The 1973 Critical Issues Conference of the National Education Association (NEA) was convened in Portland, Oregon. The 3-day forum combined problems, suggestions, and ideas of delegates and members within the field of education. The topics discussed by politicians and educational leaders included educational unity in the face of crisis, heightened federal aid to education, teacher rights and changing constitutional issues, participatory democracy in schools, minority group teachers, accountability and public responsibility, school finance reform, teacher involvement in politics, the future of collective bargaining, state indoctrination in schools, alternative schools, transactional analysis, students as decision makers, women's liberation, pornography in the classroom, drugs, language and cultural differences in the classroom, and the role of teachers and future shock. (An introductory statement concerning the publication is made by Catharine Barrett, president of NEA.) (BRB)

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"1983: School as a Concept, Not a Place."

A DECADE OF TRANSITION

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1973 CRITICAL ISSUES CONFERENCE
NEA CONVENTION, PORTLAND, OREGON, JUNE 29-JULY 1

SP 006 686

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The NEA's first critical issues conference is now history rather than just a dream because you—the NEA members and delegates—have called for a change in the NEA convention format. The NEA representative assembly has always dealt effectively with the business of the association and has molded and changed the NEA to comply with the changing needs of members and the profession.

But, at the same time, delegates also wanted a forum at the association's annual meeting where they could grow professionally as educators and as change agents in our society...where they could freely express themselves and share ideas, problems, and suggestions with teachers and authorities in different fields on the issues of the day. Delegates and members also wanted to see the association in the mainstream of the big issues, both within education and affecting education ultimately, and wanted a forum to draw the public's attention to these relevant issues. The idea of a critical issues conference thus evolved.

The originator of the theme for this conference, the late Dr. Ole Sand of NEA Instruction and Professional Development, always decried what he termed the "2x4x6 teacher" who is bound by the two covers of a textbook, the four walls of a classroom, and the six periods of a day. The conference theme, "1983: School as a Concept, Not a Place," emphasizes that education is not bound within the walls of school buildings. Education can take place anywhere. Every community has resources which can be used effectively to improve education. We must recognize the growing need to move schooling into the community and, conversely, to move the community into the schooling of its youth.

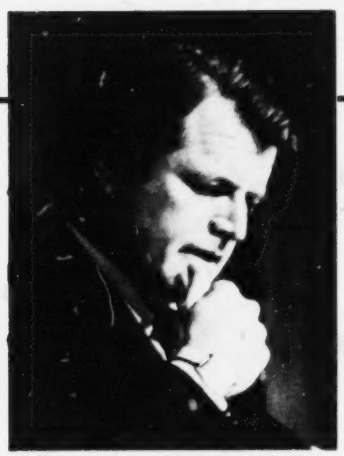
The decade ahead will be one of change. New roles for schools and teachers will evolve to meet the changing needs of tomorrow's students. If educators are not the ones who lead in reshaping our educational system, others will take over as change agents.

The first critical issues conference is over. But the work has only begun. We hope that the interchange has provided delegates with new ideas, concepts, and approaches to take back to the schools and the local and state education associations and that these will be the stimuli for positive future change in education.

Catharine Barrett

This booklet is dedicated to the more than
9,000 teachers and association staff who have made
NEA's first Critical Issues Conference a success.

Senator Kennedy



"The way we resolve the critical issues you discuss here will determine not only the quality of education in the coming decade, but the quality of American life for coming generations . . . "

"It is a sad day in this country when the NEA's advocacy of America's schools earns it a place on the White House list of public enemies . . . "

Unity key to unlock education's crisis in confidence

The "crisis of confidence" in American education and all public institutions can be ended only through national unity in setting new priorities, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) told more than 5,000 teachers in keynoting the NEA's Critical Issues Conference.

In introducing Kennedy, NEA President Catharine Barrett cited Kennedy's pro-education record. Kennedy in turn commended the NEA's role in achieving "every landmark piece of federal education legislation enacted." He mentioned NEA names back to President George Fischer, also commending Presidents Helen Bain, Donald Morrison and Barrett, and former Executive Secretary Sam Lambert.

"It is a sad day when persons such as the NEA leaders I cited are on a White House list of public enemies rather than on a list of distinguished public servants," he said, referring to testimony during the Senate Watergate hearings relative to the NEA's position against parochiaid.

Noting he also is on the same "enemy" list, he added, "It is an honor to be in such distinguished company."

As he blushed a bit at the opening ovation, Kennedy, hands on hips, surveyed the crowd and sighed, "I always dreamed of standing in an arena like this and addressing a great national convention. Even though this is the wrong hall and the wrong year, I am glad to be here anyway."

As keynoter, Kennedy cited " . . . five issues that our leadership must face over the next decade, tests we must meet and pass if we are to restore public confidence in public education."

- First, convince the public "schools do make a difference"—not only in economics but in human fulfillment.

He quoted estimates that the failure of males 24 to 34 years of age to graduate from high school would cost $237 billion in income and $70 billion in taxes over their lifetimes.

"Luck may well be important in economic success, as Professor Christopher Jencks argues, but one still must gain entry to the room where the game is played, and education provides the key."

And " . . . since when do we measure the quality of life of our citizens by the size of their bank accounts? Since when is education's value no longer measured by its ability to bring into our society men and women who are better informed, more capable of leadership and more confident of their ability to cope with change?"

• Second, fulfill the nation's promises to the deprived with "compensatory education, still our best hope."

"Compensatory education does not mean spending more money to buy air conditioners, or portable swimming pools, or to substitute federal dollars for state dollars. It means teaching children to read, providing community aides children relate to, using every resource to improve the education of the disadvantaged, providing bilingual and bicultural education to every child. If we are deaf to the cries of the 10 million disadvantaged children, we are deaf to the cry of justice in America."

• Third, solve the school finance crisis, with the Rodriguez decision considered as a "beginning" and 33 percent federal aid a realistic goal, particularly in light of federal underwriting of 90 percent of highways, two thirds of mass transit.

"Taxpayers are going to look to the states and Congress to right the inequities in opportunity and taxation. In Kansas, in Minnesota, North Dakota and Utah, state legislatures already have acted and others are sure to follow. But states cannot resolve the fiscal puzzle on their own."

• Fourth, achieve equality of educational opportunity lacking nearly 20 years after the Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education decision.

"The absence of any sign of executive leadership leaves this burden primarily to the courts," with the Denver desegregation mandate by the court in mid-June the latest example of court leadership.

"I do not propose busing white children to a school that is broken down, second rate, or dangerous, a school where education has no chance; but I condemn a system that permits black children to remain in those schools for a single day longer."

• Fifth, demonstrate education can change and innovate to achieve quality education for every child, in suburbs as well as ghettoes, even in face of a rapidly changing world.

"I know that many of today's schools have overwhelming discipline problems. I know in many schools there are drugs and muggings and extortion. I know too that some experiments have not worked. But that does not mean we stop trying.

"When one-quarter of all our students in the suburbs as well as the cities continue to have reading problems, when children leave school unable to grasp the meaning of the morning newspaper, then we must change the way today's schools are teaching our children.

"As an organization, NEA must use its political power, not under the banner of party, but under the banner of education. It must not be politically safe to vote against the needs of the nation's children."

Kennedy challenged the conferees that "the way we resolve the critical issues before the conference will determine not only the quality of education in the coming decade, but the quality of American life for coming generations."

The Nixon administration took many of Kennedy's blows. The crisis of confidence in education "cannot be totally divorced from the distrust and dissatisfaction of citizens toward all of our institutions," he said.

He pointed to President Nixon's "grand slam of vetoes" of education appropriations the past four years, his veto of the child care center program as "radical," his starving of the administration's own Right to Read program, and the recent effort to substitute revenue sharing for the hard-gained federal education programs of the past 10 years. "These actions are not evidence of leadership," he repeated as he went down the grocery list of Nixon failures, to the applause of the audience.

The question, "Can we keep on spending more on bombing in one year than on Title I in four years?" brought the expected audience reaction.

Those in attendance gave Kennedy emotion-sustained ovations before and after his speech. And they interrupted his remarks at least 10 times with enthusiastic agreement.

NEA President Barrett—as the final applause was dying, assured Kennedy, "There are two million teachers who are determined education shall become the priority of this nation."

Saturday Morning

Heightened Teacher Political Activity, More Federal Education Aid Urged

Rep. Albert H. Quie

"I do not support the concept of general aid until we have fully met our obligation to provide adequate education to the handicapped, to those who are educationally disadvantaged, and to those who seek occupational education and training."

"I am hopeful that the combination of a new way to distribute Title I monies, an emphasis on individualized instruction, and the involvement of parents in the educational process would result in the greatest educational revolution this nation has ever seen."

Rep. James G. O'Hara

"Politics is the way we decide how much of our public money you—and the children you teach—are worth. And if YOU don't get into politics with both feet, someone else is going to make that decision for you."

"I hope that you have all unlearned the advice so earnestly given you by doctors, lawyers, bankers, and Presidents to the effect that there ought to be one profession which remained above the lure of money and that it ought to be yours, not theirs."

Dr. Walter W. Heller

"Plowing more money and resources into education raises its quality, and higher educational quality produces higher educational achievement and higher economic productivity. That is supported by empirical economic research."

"In 1971 we added a major weapon to fiscal and monetary policy. We added wage-price policy. Being fond of quoting authors of the 1930's when I was going to college, I want to quote Al Capone. He said, 'You can get so much further with a kind word and gun than with a kind word.' "

Greater political involvement by teachers—particularly in light of the Nixon administration's failures and inaction on the education front—and increased federal aid for education were called for by two U.S. Congressmen and one of the nation's leading economists.

The current administration's shortcomings in education were hit by both Rep. James O'Hara (D-MI) and Dr. Walter Heller, professor of economics at the University of Minnesota and former chief of the President's Council of Economic Advisors. Criticisms centered on the administration's inadequate budget requests for education, failure to fund existing legislation, backward movement on the education revenue sharing program, and failure to develop guidelines which properly apply educational legislation to school situations. Even Rep. Albert Quie (R-MN), who terms himself a "conservative Republican" and a friend of the administration on many issues, hit the use of outdated 1960 census data to determine distribution formulas to dependent children despite drastic changes in poverty and welfare percentages.

Citing instance after instance of administration inactivity or discouragement, O'Hara strongly urged educators to become politically active, noting, "Politics is the way we decide how much of our public money you—and the children you teach—are worth. And if YOU don't get into politics with both feet, someone else is going to make that decision for you."

While suggesting that the education community remain neutral and not attach itself to either the Democratic or Republican party, O'Hara added that "This is your society, and your government. And the only way you can make it respond to the needs which you perceive is to become as active as you know how in its political life." The politician got a chuckle from the audience when he later added, "While I have a high regard for school teachers, I certainly don't think you are too good to associate with us politicians."

He told teachers, "You are engaged in the very difficult search for a formula by which you can achieve the ability to bargain collectively for a fair share of the economic resources of the community and still retain the professional aura which has so long characterized education. That 'aura,' incidentally, is already beginning to lose some of the high value so carefully placed upon it by school boards and pillars of the community who have long urged upon school teachers the notion that your pedagogy is so priceless that it ought to be offered as a public service, and that the grubby business of buying food and shelter should be something you do out of the money you earn on evenings and weekends in some less exalted job.

"I hope," he continued, "that you have all unlearned the advice so earnestly given you by doctors, lawyers, bankers, and Presidents to the effect that there ought to be one profession which remained above the lure of money and that it ought to be yours, not theirs. And I hope there is another lesson you have learned. . . As long as I can remember, the very same people who have been fighting against aid to education have been busily telling teachers that they ought to stay out of politics. That is very much the same line as that used by the men who for so many years fought to protect women from the degradation of politics by keeping them out of the polling booth."

Each of the three distinguished panelists spoke to the issue of increased federal aid to education but appeared to see funds going for different purposes. O'Hara's chief proposal involved public funding of an additional two years of post secondary education through the community and junior colleges so that "the first two years of college should become within the next decade an integral part of the educational experience of every young person instead of the prize we extend to less than 50 percent of our young people."

Quie said that even as a conservative Republican he can accept as a goal an increase to 25 percent federal funding of total education expenditures compared with the present seven percent, while Heller said he would support one-third federal funding. The economist estimated that a realistic program of federal aid to education will have to be in the $10 to $18 billion range—similar to NEA's recommended $16 billion federal foundation program. Quie said that he does "not support the concept of general aid until we have fully met our obligation to provide adequate education to the handicapped, to those who are educationally disadvantaged, and to those who seek occupational education and training."

In citing his priorities on the use of federal monies for education, particularly in times of financial stringency, Quie added, "In all of these instances, if we fail as a government and a society to remedy deficiencies or to provide skills in early life, the life-long burden on government at all levels will far exceed the cost of the initial service. Although states and

local districts also have an obligation in these areas, it is the federal government which must insure these obligations are met."

Heller said that society's priorities demand increased federal aid to education and urged increased federal taxes to do this, noting: "A federal tax increase is no major crime or major sin; it would be the path of virtue." If we can't get it from the defense budget, it is not a fate worse than death to increase the tax rate. The economist further pointed out, "If we plow more money into education, we'll get vast returns." He said that America's investment in brain power helps to provide "much reduction in poverty."

While higher taxes to provide for education and other social services and disparities in this country were deemed necessary by Heller, he also predicted an easing of the school financial problem in the next decade with the slower rise of school outlays due to the reduction in the rate of population increase. Heller also predicted that the United States will probably avoid a recession after teetering on the edge and that the economy will move ahead next year and resume a reasonably good rate of growth over the next year and a half.

Saturday Afternoon

Can schools help the poor — get richer and gain power?

Can a poor Southern boy, son of migrant farmworkers, wash dishes all day, study diligently at night by a 40-watt bulb, abide by the Puritan work ethic, and thereby become president of Standard Oil, a trustee of MIT, and a stockholder in ITT? So goes a favorite American myth, but don't believe a word of it. Who possesses economic power? Why? What groups lack equality of economic and social standing? Why? May the balance be redressed? Can schools really help the poor get richer?

Economic power in the U.S. is wielded by the military-industrial complex. "Military planners have been successful. . . because they understand the democratic process," said Girard Hottleman, director of educational services for the Massachusetts Teachers Association. "It is," said Hottleman, "a magnificent establishment" that successfully convinces Americans to pump increasing sums into military efforts. (Of the 1973 U.S. budget, defense is a whopping line item of 48 per cent—$120.6 billion.)

The "magnificent establishment" channels money into design and feasibility studies; dangles the financial plum before various firms, cities, and states; and then lobbies Congress for funds. The process is self-propagating. Under military assistance programs, personnel are trained, using weapons which their countries do not manufacture—and which they later request from the U.S. Result 1: a fat contract for a U.S. arms maker. Result 2: military spending affords complete livelihoods for 10 percent of our work force. During the 20 years prior to 1967, $904 billion (57.3 percent of the federal budget) went for "military power." Less than seven percent, $96 billion, went to programs in education, community development, and social welfare.

Consider $30 billion which the Pentagon plans to spend over the next 10 years on a supersonic plane, the Safeguard anti-ballistic missile, and advanced manned strategic aircraft. Spent elsewhere, at $3 billion per year, the $30 billion would: nearly double federal support for primary and secondary education; or double federal job and training programs for the unemployed or disadvantaged; or triple present levels of food assistance programs.

"The United States has," according to Hottleman, "a large poor population, a method of survival called public education, and a governance structure that is rich." "Poor people" are those unable to acquire basic necessities without outside help. Significant correlations exist between education and poverty levels. For instance, only three percent of families in which the head is college educated qualify as "poor." Some 45 percent of households in which the head has no schooling are "poor." A teacher who inspires someone to attend college has boosted that person's lifetime earning expectation by $250,000. Hottleman also reported that if teachers were paid according to what they contribute to society, they would earn average salaries of $38,500 per year.

Teachers and other middle class Americans are exploited in many ways, said Hottleman, pointing specifically to this country's tax structure. "To see where power lies in a society," he suggested wryly, "examine its tax structure. The American tax structure favors the already wealthy and the large businesses."

To achieve real equality of education and to shift the demand for accountability to school boards where it rightly belongs, educators must overcome rigid power structures. Hottleman said these include caste systems guarded tightly by self-interests of school boards and businesses and restricted by property tax systems.

The prescription is for diagnosis, for remediation, and for change.

Teacher rights: Current constitutional issues

School boards not only have the legal authority to determine *what* can be taught in the classroom, but also *how* teachers must teach. The only legal restraint on use of this authority would be the "degree of reasonableness" in their decisions as determined by the courts.

The message from top legal authorities at a session on teacher rights clearly indicated that teachers do not have the freedom to teach that they thought they had. And, the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling stipulating that local communities shall decide what constitutes pornography and obscenity could increase local school board powers in regulating what is taught and how teachers teach it. However, implications of the new ruling for classroom teachers are still to be determined.

Several teachers objected to what they termed "negativism" on the part of the panelists and urged teachers to use their own techniques to gain favorable community attitudes and court rulings to free teachers to teach. One teacher called for teachers through their associations to create the atmosphere and pressure—similar to that created by the women's rights and anti-war proponents—which would bring about more favorable court verdicts giving more freedom to teach.

Panelist Thomas Shannon, legal counsel to the Association of California School Administrators and San Diego City Schools and Community Colleges, disagreed with his legal colleagues. Instead, he joined in the teacher call to action to change the law, and urged teachers to organize. Although school boards have the legal authority, most do not exercise it in a restrictive sense, Shannon said.

Both Shannon and Michael Gottesman, attorney for the Montgomery County (Md.) Education Association, also noted some new and positive directions in securing teacher rights. As Shannon said, "The law is a living thing." The courts interpret the law on the basis of the changing attitudes and conditions of society "and the right of teachers to teach will be considered in the framework of today's society." He said that four factors affect the academic freedom of teachers today:

The changing court view of education: Where education used to be interpreted as dissemination of information, the Supreme Court in Tinker vs. the Des Moines Independent School District said, "Schools are the marketplace of ideas," and neither students nor teachers shed their "free speech" First Amendment rights at the school door.

Shannon said, "We are currently in a shake-down period where additional litigation on the limits of the landmark Tinker case will test state laws and school board rules governing student and teacher conduct."

18-year-old age of majority: Full citizenship rights are now attained at age 18. "Formerly considered in their tender years, these students are now voting and being held legally responsible for their actions," Shannon said.

Status of Women: "The tomboy is coming into her own," he added, "and as society's expectations change, this also alters the classroom situation." Courts will consider these and other factors in "analyzing the rights of teachers to teach," Shannon predicted, pointing out that court changes often occur **after** society changes.

The three-pronged test of the Tinker case is "the absolute minimum standard" since it is the only Supreme Court ruling on academic freedom, he said. If the teacher's method of teaching or use of materials results in material destruction of classwork, substantial disorder, or invasion of the rights of others, such conduct and materials may be prohibited beforehand, or the teacher may be punished, the ruling says.

Gottesman cautioned conference participants that the Supreme Court which decided the Tinker case is not the same court we have now. The new court could define teacher rights differently. Major areas of academic freedom and potential controversial topics that will demand more legal definition, according to Gottesman, include classroom obscenity and sex related topics, religious and philosophical topics, classroom discussion on social issues, and a teacher's right to "talk in class about issues concerning teacher-employer relations."

Turning to the emerging legal cases concerning homosex-

ual and lesbian teachers, Gottesman pointed out that a teacher cannot be dismissed just because he or she is "discovered." Courts are ruling that school boards must first prove that the teacher's sexual activites are detrimental to his or her effectiveness as a teacher. But, again, he acknowledged, this varies according to the community. Both attorneys agreed that the area of teacher rights is still in its beginning stages and much more litigation would be forthcoming before definitive judgments are made.

Participatory democracy: Can it work in schools?

There was quite a storm before the calm reassurance by a student rights panel that participatory democracy can and will work in the public schools. Participants, including some invited from the audience, mixed shouts and jeers with carefully prepared and studiously delivered remarks.

Moderator Ken Simpson, New York, former Student NEA executive committee member, presided over mostly high school and college level panelists. But not without incident.

The forum began innocently enough—with panelist Roger Stephon, a Michigan Education Association staff member, saying that teachers often feel threatened by students seeking rights. Teacher training institutions, he maintained, should provide help to teachers in this area. "If the teacher problem is solved," he said, "students can find some 'ownership,' and there will be some participatory democracy in the schools."

His statement was answered by student panelists who said they had been led to feel that student government is okay if what the students want agrees with what the principal wants.

Students stated flatly they wanted to have the right to decide on curriculum. They had sharp criticism for such school actions as the release of teachers who teach in a manner contradictory to community mores.

A black panelist noted that there were no black students on the 12-member panel and said that their absence was indicative of the lack of concern in schools for black students. He noted that the right to attend school is one of today's chief issues. He contended that student rights questions must be addressed to Constitutional issues and added that major student rights problems are yet to come when full desegregation arrives in the north.

"Minority students," said a bearded, braided-haired youth in the audience, "realize early that there is no participatory democracy in the schools." American Indian panelist Lloyd Elm, New York, agreed, saying that students soon find if they are tabbed as revolutionary, "they are out."

As dialog continued hot and heavy, a Texas high school principal incurred the wrath of some panelists and audience participants. Indeed, he left the meeting early after such comments as, "I know more about being young than you do about being old." . . . "How are you students qualifed to tell me how to run a school when I can barely do it at my age?" . . . "You youngsters talk about gut issues, but I wonder if any of you has done any hard labor." . . . "Everything we've done in the past is not bad."

His apparent hostility to student rights was challenged by the free school advocate who called it a "shame" that he hadn't learned more in his years as an administrator. "My role as a teacher," declared the advocate, "is to teach people to learn in different ways. Freedom is chaotic," he said. "Students put more value in experiential learning than conceptual learning. Students and teachers must work together to obtain student rights, but, he warned, "we must live with anxiety in order to do it."

One adult blamed her own age group for copping out on the problem. "We oppose student rights by saying students are not old enough to be responsible and that they don't have the qualifications."

"As teachers," said a member of the audience, "we fought like the dickens to get our rights, but we somehow say to students—'I'm sorry, you're not people—you don't have any rights."

Agreement came from both audience and panelists when one said, "If we are going to have participatory democracy, we must provide the kids with the kinds of experiences that will enable them to deal with their rights." After this stormy session, general consensus was reached that participatory democracy on a minor level is working at the present time but that it must be expanded if the rights of all human beings are to be preserved.

Desegregated: not yet integrated

Integration does not exist in the schools of this country, according to Herman Coleman, former MEA associate executive secretary of Minority Affairs and newly named executive secretary of the Michigan Education Association. He further held that those institutions that have undertaken desegregation plans have unfortunately dealt solely with the placement of black and white bodies.

Coleman discussed six desegregation-related questions with participating teachers—sharing first his views with the group as a whole, and then directing small group discussions which later reported back the findings. Both he and the small groups dealt with the following issues pertinent to the desegregation problems—personnel and administration, curriculum, in-service training, testing, school governance, and student rights.

One of the groups agreed with Coleman's contention that few school districts recognize the need for strong minority hiring practices. It was determined that much could be done to alleviate problems in hiring minorities through increased local association training in minority awareness, active involvement by regional NEA offices and UniServ directors in minority recruitment, and the negotiation of strong policies dealing with minority hiring.

"School districts must adopt a multi-ethnic approach to curriculum," Coleman said. The small group discussing this issue supported his statement and called for NEA guidelines that could be used to evaluate all curriculum for racial bias.

Coleman maintained that school districts must have ongoing human relations training for teachers and that teachers should have a voice in the content of that training. The corresponding small group not only agreed but felt that in-service training was the key to the entire issue of integration. Such training should be required of all teachers, held during the school day, precede any system-wide integration plan, and include both teachers and parents.

"Testing is often used as a segregation device, and many existing standardized tests have already been ruled as unconsitituional by the courts," according to Coleman. He cited the high percentage of minority students who are placed in special education classes, as proof of testing bias. The group concentrating on testing was likewise critical of existing standardized tests—calling for the NEA to oppose the use of such tests, especially those which have already been found unconstitutional by the courts.

Coleman questioned whether school governance could work under a strict democratic process. "White teachers will always be in the majority, but minority teachers must be assured of representation on governance bodies," he added. In addition, the group dealing with governance recommended that schools should set up community councils with membership open to teachers, parents, and students. The function: to advise school boards on curriculum, personnel, and operational policies.

Coleman proposed that students have the right to due process at the same level as procedural due process for teachers. Teachers were in agreement and placed the responsibility on local school boards to write and publish all student policies.

Accountability to education: The public responsibility

Teachers feel responsible for what they accomplish in the classroom, but they reject notions of accountability imposed by those outside the classroom for purely financial considerations, according to discussions at a session on the public's responsibility in educational accountability.

The session attracted a standing-room-only crowd of teachers. They represented a variety of states, ages, and viewpoints, but they agreed on one thing: any system of decision making dealing with accountability, evaluation, and such must include legally protected teacher participation.

While the session was designed to focus on the public's responsibility, the educators concentrated on the dangers of accountability systems formulated without teacher involvement.

Mort Mondale, Minnesota, chairman of the NEA Board of Directors, Committee on Accountability, outlined five criteria which, in his view, are vital components of accountability:

- Accountability projects must be accountable, with maximum classroom teacher involvement.
- Classroom teachers must make the decisions relating to teaching and have full participation in decision making at all levels.

• Federal and state educational funding must be increased to "depressurize" local school districts, so that accountability systems will not be based on financial considerations.
• Federal and state accountability legislation must reflect educational needs.
• The goals that are measured must be creative and fit the needs of teachers, students, and parents of the local district.

Mondale noted that many accountability projects have been used to find economic answers, not educational ones, and have centered on standardized testing. "What kind of accountability is it," he asked, "when you have non-English-speaking kids taking tests written in English?" He decried a "cult of empiricism" which discounts goals that cannot be measured statistically.

As Dave Darland, acting director of NEA's Instruction and Professional Development Division, put it, "Those things we know are most valuable are the hardest to measure." He said teachers have to decide what it is they are responsible for and then define those conditions. "The public must provide for teachers to meet their responsibilities."

Participants studied a model of educational decision making which would guarantee accountability because groups would be responsible only for those decisions in their province to make. The model is divided into five components including societal, political, institutional, instructional, and individual. Educators have no control over the societal and individual components.

The political element represents public bodies, including Congress, state legislatures, and school boards, which consider societal and individual needs to set priorities and make policies for education which reflect those needs.

The institutional element, or educational management, carries out decisions made by political bodies. The managers coordinate resource distribution. Teachers, the instructional component, are charged with reconciling student needs with the needs of the educational institutions.

Outside the bureaucracy of the political, institutional, and instructional components is the independent, United Teaching Profession which influences society's decision making and initiates changes. It also represents the vehicle through which teachers can say "NO" when society asks them to do things they do not have the resources to do.

Mel Leasure, Michigan, chairman of NEA's Council on Instruction and Professional Development, pointed out that the Chamber of Commerce originated the concept of accountability in the 1950's. Now the Chamber has a national committee on educational accountability, and no committee on accountability in business.

Teachers were cautioned not to isolate themselves from each other and to share their common problems and observations about educational trends, so that those outside the classroom cannot impose restraint on those dealing directly with education's clients—the children. As one participant put it, "When we are kept from sharing with each other, we become functionally illiterate."

A college teacher from Pennsylvania said the push for accountability came from outside the profession. He noted that teachers have always been accountable for their classroom performance. The elderly gentleman said, "When mothers ask 'what did you learn in school today?' their children better have learned something to tell about.

"I suggest," he added, "that we as teachers ask the same question of our children before they ever walk out of our classroom."

Population changes in America: What do they mean for teachers?

"Laissez-faire in population control probably will not produce the result we want, and we may eventually have to consider giving up the freedom to 'do our own thing' in reproductive matters," Dr. Garrett Hardin, professor of human ecology at the University of California at Santa Barbara, told participants during a session on population changes.

Dr. Hardin cautioned that "because we can always see farther than we can act, the idea I have mentioned cannot even be offered for debate at this time." He said, however, that the population problem is so critical that "we must begin to act bit-by-bit, discreetly, and with knowledge of the actions we may be forced to take in five or ten years."

Participants in the session got an in-depth look at world and national demographic projections from Dr. Leon Bouvier, University of Rhode Island professor and professoral lecturer at the Center for Population Research of Georgetown University. Bouvier said that the celebrated "baby boom" has now become the "baby bust." He cau-

tioned present-day Zero Population Growth (ZPG) optimists to "learn from the past," noting that the present "low fertility rate may be the lull before the storm" and may be occasioned by the same kind of child postponement syndrome which preceded the population boom in the late 40's.

He encouraged educators to get population information into the school curriculum. Bouvier reported that a recent survey of 1,600 urban high school students in New York and New Jersey found that 43 percent knew little or nothing about population and that those who did cited as their major sources of knowledge Richard Nixon, Walter Cronkite, Carol Burnett, Billy Graham, and Dick Cavett.

Kathryn Horsley, director of population education for the Population Reference Bureau in Washington, D.C., outlined some curriculum materials available to help teach about population change and noted that concern about population growth can be incorporated into the curriculum by such simple methods as the wording of a math problem. She encouraged educators to become concerned about the population crisis, noting that "each time our society has a problem, it mobilizes its educators to solve it."

In small group discussions, participants attempted to come up with methods educators might use in helping to fight the population problem. Among suggestions offered was one to discontinue the federal tax deduction for children, with the $20 billion revenue savings to be used to upgrade the nation's education system. The groups expressed concern, however, about the value judgments which must be faced in dealing with population control. One father reported the youngest of his six children "recently came home very upset because our family is too large."

The groups also raised the question of the difficulty of putting population education into the curriculum in some areas because of the fear among laymen that "it is a smoke screen for sex education." Participants generally agreed that NEA and state and local education associations can do more to help individual teachers become aware of the population crisis and that the education associations must show leadership in helping to solve the problem.

School finance reform: Cure or curb?

The major path to school finance reform is legislative and not judicial, although court decisions have created momentum for reform, concluded a panel discussing whether such reform is "Cure or Curb." Panelists reviewed various possibilities for easing the growing pinch on school budgets.

It won't be easy. But then it never was. One reason, as NEA's Jean Flanigan summed up, is that "One man's tax reform is another man's curb. If we equalize funds, we inevitably put limits on the wealthy district, and someone is hurt. In the process, no one is ever entirely happy."

Panelists agreed it takes money to improve the quality of education—Harvard professor Christopher Jencks and other critics notwithstanding—but expressed belief that the issue is more complex than that. The California Supreme Court's decision on the Serrano case, still in the litigation process, has stimulated other state legislatures to clean house in school finance. The U.S. Supreme Court's recent 5 to 4 reversal in the Texas Rodriguez case on school finance probably slowed down change in this area temporarily, but not in the long run, panelists maintained. "In the long run, the Supreme Court composition will change. Almost surely we will have another case brought up," said panelist Dr. Victor Hornbostel of the University of Tulsa.

The heaviest role in legislating reform lies with the states, Hornbostel believes, because education is a state responsibility. Full state funding "appears to be the most straightforward way" of putting the full wealth of the state behind the student, Hornbostel said. But because the property tax is relied on so heavily, it cannot be replaced overnight. Special education revenue sharing was termed a "subterfuge because it is not revenue sharing at all." It was proposed that sharing income tax revenue with the states, with virtually no strings, would keep up with inflation. At least a one-third federal funding of total school costs, long supported by NEA, was proposed by one panelist.

The educational voucher system, or "scrip to be spent for education," was seen as attractive to some but fraught with problems. Issues in this approach are: the progress made in reducing discrimination and inequalities might be lost, and private schools could lose their freedom.

The successful battle against a voucher system in Rochester, N.Y., was described by Robert Paliwodzinski, UniServ coordinator there. The Office of Economic Opportunity pressured teachers and community groups to adopt the experiment, but teacher political savvy defeated it, he said.

History-making congressional action on educational finance was discussed by James Green of the NEA legislative staff. A continuing resolution was agreed to by the Congress on the last day of the federal fiscal year (June 30) during the Critical Issues Conference and was on its way to the President. If signed, schools could for the first time begin planning for the fall with the knowledge that funds would be available. Congressional action came at the end of the first year in history in which education operated a full year on another continuing resolution. The new resolution extends funding at previous levels until September 30.

With the cooperation of Chairman George Mahon of House Appropriations, NEA won special provisions protecting education in the continuing resolution. Also, school districts are protected against drastic cuts in funds because of a switch from the 1960 to the 1970 census in calculating ESEA Title 1 funds.

Teacher political power: Uses and abuses

If you want to be heard in politics, then get involved—and maybe even become a candidate, teacher-politicians advocated before an audience of 700.

Speakers were Lt. Gov. Wayne Sanstead of North Dakota, the highest-ranking elected public official who still works in a classroom; State Sen. Grace Mickelson of South Dakota, a Rapid City high school teacher; and State Sen. Oliver Ocasek of Ohio, a university professor in Akron and chairman of the NEA Legislative Committee.

The North Dakota lieutentant governor heralded the NEA's good results in backing political candidates—141 winners in the 184 elections in which NEA was involved in 1972.

"Teachers are well qualified to be political candidates," Sanstead said. "More and more they are being elected to political offices across the land, from the local and county level right up through the congressional level." But Sanstead warned that teachers must be careful not to abuse their newfound political strength, and must be concerned with issues beyond education. "Let's move into the areas of concern for all citizens—areas such as health care and programs for youth. Let's not consider only our own parochial concerns," advised Sanstead.

South Dakota Sen. Mickelson, the only woman in the state senate and also president-elect of the South Dakota Education Association, said a political action meeting at the NEA convention three years ago led to her involvement in politics. After hearing a discussion there on teacher involvement in politics, she began to take part in her local party unit and within months was appointed to a vacant senate seat. She ran for the seat in the next election—with the backing of teachers—and won.

Mickelson said the presence of a teacher in the South Dakota senate probably was one reason why the appropriations committee this year recommended the largest amount for education the state has ever spent. She feels strongly that teachers should be involved wholeheartedly in politics, noting that "a flagrant misuse of teacher power would be to remain neutral."

Ohio Sen. Ocasek credited the political action of the Ohio Education Association with winning an additional $1 billion for education in the past six years. Author of 400 bills in the 15 years he has been a legislator, Ocasek said, "I offer no apologies for sponsoring bills on behalf of the Ohio Education Association." Teachers in Ohio through political action have not only increased educational financing but have acquired political clout; 80 percent of OEA-backed candidates have won election. "Newspapers endorse candidates, and unions and chambers of commerce endorse candidates. Why shouldn't teachers?" Ocasek asked.

He said teachers also should recognize their right to express views on national topics such as the nomination of a commissioner of education or a Supreme Court justice. "Washington is where the action is, and you are there through the NEA," he said. "The NEA is an adult today. We have come a long way. We have many friends on Capitol Hill." Ocasek urged teachers to donate to the NEA's political action campaign and also to support state association political campaigns because "educational funding is still fundamentally a state responsibility."

CAPE: The future of public sector bargaining

Teachers experienced in collective bargaining overflowed the meeting room. They listened to comments and retorted with sharp questions to the executive director of the Coalition of American Public Employees and the director of the Institute of Labor Relations at Cornell University.

The power and responsibility of the NEA to become a viable force in the American labor movement was the central theme of Ralph Flynn, new executive director of CAPE, which includes the NEA in its membership.

Flynn, whose coalition represents some four million public employees, answered questions from NEA members on the source of this power and the advisability of an alliance with labor since two of the member-groups are affiliated with AFL-CIO.

Flynn explained, "NEA's failure, in the past, has been its total inability as an institution to grasp the fact that the American labor movement is at a crossroads and that NEA possesses the leverage to determine what direction that movement will take. Unless the NEA and its affiliates accept and assert their power and responsibility, they will have missed a significant chance to shape the course of history."

Flynn pointed out that while litigation to eliminate the Hatch Act, which severely restricts the political activities of public employees, has failed in the Supreme Court, the long term outlook is optimistic for another coalition goal: a national collective bargaining law for public employees. Such a bill was recently introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. In answer to questions, Flynn explained that the bill, as now written, would give employees the choice of binding arbitration or the strike and that such a national law would not weaken strong state laws.

CAPE membership includes the NEA, the National Association of Internal Revenue Employees, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees and the International Association of Fire Fighters. The latter two are affiliated with AFL-CIO.

CAPE involvement with organized labor prompted several questions. In answer to one charge that CAPE was a "roundabout method of affiliating with the AFL-CIO," Flynn answered a definite "No," explaining that such a subterfuge would "patronize" the NEA membership to whom he assigned more sophistication than did the questioner.

Another questioner challenged Flynn's statement that NEA could be a central figure in a labor movement when it is not officially allied with AFL-CIO. Flynn called the reasoning a "common fallacy," pointing out that the Teamsters and the United Auto Workers, two of the strongest units of organized labor, are not affiliated. "The AFL-CIO and the labor movement are not the same thing."

He continued, "We in the coalition have come to understand that we do not face an either/or proposition. It does not follow that in order for public employees to have the advantage of collective strength, they must surrender independence and align with any one union. The coalition's birth and its growth and its successes clearly illustrate that fact."

Collective bargaining 'per se' was the topic of Robert Doherty, director of Cornell's Institute of Public Employees, who often serves as arbitrator, mediator, or fact finder in the public sector. From his perspective as a neutral, he defined three expectations which, while not new, he sees as acquiring a new urgency within the last few years: 1) the expectation of fairness since "collective bargaining is almost an essential mechanism for achieving fair treatment"; 2) the expectation that public institutions be placed under more direct control of those who depend on and support those institutions since many "believe that they can no longer rely on a cumbersome, remote, and unresponsive bureaucracy to provide the remedies so desperately needed"; and 3) the expectation of efficiency which will crowd out the right to strike as the chief topic of conversation.

Doherty pointed out that while all three are worthy social goals, arguments arise when these principles are applied to specific issues. "While fairness, accountability, and efficiency are not necessarily mutually exclusive, there is nonetheless a tendency for them to be so. When we pursue one, we frequently run broadside into someone pursuing one or both of the others. We can anticipate many such collisions in the future.

Dr. Haim Ginot

"I quit teaching when I realized there was no connection between what I was teaching and what the children were learning."

Jonathan Kozol

"They scolded me for reading a poem by Robert Frost. I was teaching fourth grade, and it was a sixth grade poem. Frost didn't know it when he wrote it."

Let Children Make Choices

With an eye-twinkling sense of humor, noted psychologist and author Dr. Haim Ginott told teacher-delegates that children are the enemy and, as adults, their task is to make them into friends. The author of *Between Parent and Child, Between Parent and Teenager*, and *Teacher and Child* related his early experiences as an elementary teacher, saying he quit "when I realized there was no connection between what I was teaching and what the children were learning."

In remarks sprinkled with humorous, affectionate stories about children he has treated as a psychotherapist, Ginott said adults are making a mistake to think of children as friends. "When I see a child for the first time, I know that child looks at me as an enemy, so I take precautions. My role is to make friends out of children," he related. "The reason grandparents and children get along so well is because they have a common enemy," he added.

Just how to go about making friends with children is a difficult process, but one that parents and teachers should learn, according to Ginott. "The first step is to make children less dependent on adults, Ginott said, because dependency inevitably breeds hostility. Children can't be our friends because they are dependent on us."

To diminish hostility by diminishing dependency, Ginott suggested that adults let children make choices. "I use this in psychotherapy because it gives children confidence in their ability to face life," he said. Ginott, as illustrated by his examples, does not believe it takes much of a choice to satisfy a child. He said, "Ask the child if he wants his eggs hard or very hard. It tells him you think he is capable of making a choice."

Besides choices, give credit instead of threats, Ginott proposed. And what if a parent asks, "Do you want tomato

Sunday Morning

State Indoctrination: The Function of Schools?

A Boston teacher who was fired for "curriculum deviation" deviated from his prepared text to make a bitter attack on "state indoctrination" in public schools and to state strong support of educational vouchers and free schools.

Jonathan Kozol, teacher and author, said he was "bounced" out of the Boston public schools for reading a poem by black poet Langston Hughes to an almost all-black class. Kozol said he was also "scolded" for reading a poem by Robert Frost. "I was teaching fourth grade, and that was a sixth grade poem. Frost didn't know it when he wrote it."

Now he works in and promotes free schools and a voucher system which would allow parents to shop for the school they want for their children. Kozol sees the voucher system as "essential" for survival of the free school so that parents do not have to pay twice for their children's education. He accused voucher opponents of fearing competition with the public schools.

With passion and stiletto-like wit, Kozol said the function of the public school in the United States, as in most other nations, is state indoctrination—a function we usually attribute to "enemy" nations.

Demanding the daily pledge of allegiance to the flag is one example he gave of such political indoctrination, noting: "If we speak of education there is something inherently dishonest to begin a discussion with a prior oath of absolute allegiance to one point of view."

Grammar instruction is a disguised form of political indoctrination, according to Kozol. "There is fearless terror in the public schools of the use of the first person pronoun, 'I.' Nobody punches the third person in the nose for his beliefs. Third person is the pronoun of self-abdication. Ethical revolutions are not made by those who speak and breathe in the third person." Part of the result, Kozol reasoned, is that students do not associate themselves as

GINOT, Continued

or orange juice?" and the child answers, "I want papaya juice (and it is the dead of winter)?" Ginott's answer is to grant the child in fantasy what he cannot have in reality. He said, "Tell him 'I wish I had papaya juice; wouldn't it be wonderful.' Instead of explanations about why he cannot have what he wants, give him your good will. Tell him you are on his side. It is easier to change his mood than his mind."

Criticism of a child's behavior will not change that behavior, but guidance will, Ginott said. Criticism attacks the child's personality traits, his personal self and talents. But guidance explains the problem and offers a solution. Using the eternal problem of spilled milk, Ginott said that instead of chastising the child for being clumsy, adults should articulate the problem—"Oh, the milk spilled"—and give a solution—"We'll get a sponge."

Adults should treat children the way they would treat guests, Ginott said. "Children are guests in our homes and our schools," he said, "and we have so few years in which to make an impact on their lives."

Questioned by a writer from *Scholastic Teacher* about the differences between his theories and behavior modification, Ginott denied any connection with the current rage in some educational and mental health circles. He said, "Behavior modification is interested in changing a child's behavior, but that is not good enough for me. I am not interested in efficient behavior, but the kind of human being we are creating in our schools."

Received warmly by the audience, Ginott reminded teachers that they are the "deciding element in the classroom," and it is their personal approach that creates whatever climate exists there.

KOZEL, Continued

participants in history or in changing what happens. They see themselves outside history.

Our relationship to history based on our myth of progress, he continued, is that of the object to the verb, the viewer to the TV screen, but "never as the actor on the stage. We watch, we speculate, we comment, we observe. We do not rise in rage. We do not struggle to transform. The evil in the myth is that it gives us ethical pacification. There is no reason to put our bodies on the line and fight for something we believe if everything good will happen anyway without us."

As proof, Kozol related these recent conversations with students:

"What is history?" "It's what shapes our lives." "Do you do that?" "No. Important people do that." "Who are they?" "Rich people." "What do your folks do?" "Our folks are doctors, lawyers, GE executives."

"How do you feel about racism?" "Things are quiet this year." "How do you feel about it?" "Well, the nation is in a period of withdrawal from that issue." "How do **YOU** feel? Right now. You?" "The campus is quiet." "How do you know?" "I read it in Newsweek."

Students turn on the TV screen to find out how they feel and where their conscience lies, Kozol maintained.

The free school movement, often as the result of "mass manipulation by the media," is totally misunderstood, Kozol claimed. It is identified as low-keyed, innovative, British education, mechanical devices, package systems, gerbil cages, Pablum. Everything that speaks of low-cost, non-controversial. But nothing that speaks of pain, rage, exploitation, struggle, or justice.

Kozol cautioned the audience to remember that his commitment to the free school movement began in the civil rights and other turmoil of the '60's. His friends had counseled him not to confuse education with the ethics and the rage that brought on Selma, Ala., the death of Kennedy and Che Guevera, the incidents at My Lai, and Kent State. But, he said, "the soil of the '70's is soaked with the blood of the martyrs of the '60's. We cannot forget the blood of our sisters and brothers who have fought and died."

Kozol plead that educators, whether working within the system or without, not turn on each other, counseling instead: "You have only to turn your eyes to Pennsylvania Avenue to find out where your enemy resides."

Sunday Afternoon

Alternative schools: A threat or a promise?

Are you time-locked? Can you choose your curriculum materials and order books? Does the principal make you nervous when he enters your room? Do you have a petty cash fund, or is it your own pocketbook? Do you control your in-service training? Proponents of alternative forms of education tested teachers wondering if they need a new approach and then prodded, "Think what is missing in your decision-making scene or structure for you to be a responsible teacher."

Alternatives—the choices people do have and should have in the schools—rather than just alternative schools was the topic. The message was clear: Teachers can make their own alternatives—particularly those who are self-actualizers, who want to take responsibility, who believe the individual, not the institution, is central.

Four admitted "reformers who have undertaken the political task of changing the school system by helping others explore strategies to move away from authoritarian teacher-administrator and teacher-student relationships" testified about their alternative experiments in Boise, Idaho, and Portland, Ore.

"Teachers are not professionals until they demand freedom to make decisions about what is right for kids. They are a product of the efficiency-oriented system just like the kids are." By that definition, her own, Beth Chadburne qualifies as a first-class professional. One of three teachers on the program from the Boise K-6 Alternative School, Chadburne is credited with starting the Boise school and earlier pushing through an open kindergarten program and teacher center run by and for teachers—with an unspent $50. Now the district will fund the center to the tune of $50,000 next fall.

Beth Chadburne's thesis: **One teacher can make a difference.** Parents and a cadre of interested Boise teachers presented a $90,000, 150-student alternative school proposal to the board and got a $40,000, 75-child OK. They hired three teachers, got the basement of the YWCA, and began ordering equipment which trickled in throughout last year.

The teachers—Chadburne, Chris Kinsey, and Tim Gleason—sought to keep the skills-oriented segment of the day small to give time for other learning. Parents and students were interviewed continually. It took time to convince students they were not to be graded and that they could choose their educational course. There was friction between kids and with teachers before things smoothed out the final three months and teachers by year-end could report good things happening. Said Gleason, "It takes much more teacher judgment. We work in small groups, get parents to teach, take students on trips, bring others in."

Jerry Conrath, an AFT member, told of his role as "head bureaucrat" in a 4.4-teacher, 150-student school-within-a-school known as Quincy School at Portland's John Adams High. "Less anesthetizing by decentralizing" is the way he put it.

The program began two years ago in one large room. It concentrates on administrative, counseling, and basic skill roles, with students spending an average of one-fourth of their time on electives in the regular Adams High. Primary advantages, cited Conrath: the ability of teachers to work closely with each child, keep a detailed record on him, and turn anti-school students into ones who "feel they are intellectually competent and could have success." Two-thirds of Adams students will be in similar programs next year.

All four teachers stressed the politics of moving to any type of alternative approach to teacher-student freedom. The consensus: Be realistic, take it a step at a time, get parent, administration, and board cooperation, and try to show how you can do better on the same money. And, as Gleason summed up, "You can rock the boat, but don't tip it over."

Transactional analysis — to an 'OK' classroom

There is an internal dialog going on between the child, adult, and parent selfs wrapped up in every individual, and teachers "have to learn to hear those inner voices if they want to have an OK classroom," urged the author of the fascinating book, *I'm OK—You're OK.*

Dr. Thomas Harris, president of the Harris Institute of Transactional Analysis, said teachers who fail to heed the inner voices soon end up with a classroom in which the teacher projects the image of "I'm OK—You're Not OK" to

students, a situation where the best learning cannot take place.

Harris' book is based on the concept that each individual is really three persons: a parent self, an adult self, and a child self, each interacting to make up the total individual and each self dominant or passive by turns. He explained that the parent self is made up "of those things you heard and saw as a child and which were filed away on a little computer and are a part of every adult." The parent self tends to be registered in the attitude, "I'm OK—You're Not OK." The child self, he said, is made up of those attitudes developed when the individual first becomes aware of his outside surroundings and his dependence on the parent figure for everything. The attitude, "I'm Not OK—You're OK" is illustrative of this self, he said.

He said the adult self "is born out of a child's need to be able to deal with life" and is best illustrated by the attitude, "I'm OK—You're OK." That position requires openness, sharing, and maturity "and is, therefore, risky for most individuals," Harris said.

Craig Johnson, program director at the Harris Institute, said a teacher attempting to move to the, "I'm OK—You're OK" concept in his classroom must be able to read himself internally. He noted far too many teachers adopt the attitude of, "I'm OK—You're Not OK" and are saying to their students: "Hey, kids, you're supposed to sit out there and be quiet. I'm going to pump you full of knowledge."

He said such an attitude won't work, that when learning is taking place an exchange is necessary between the teacher and the student personality which will doubtless be blocked if the teacher adopts only the inner voices of his parent self.

Johnson said he has a recurring nightmare that he is facing a large group of teachers and that he sees only blank faces staring back at him. "But I see some teachers who want blank faces out there because it means nobody is misbehaving." he continued.

The speakers described ways teachers can determine which "set" a student is in by analyzing him mentally, emotionally, and physically. Johnson demonstrated how he could move by the tone of his voice and his physical bearing from the dominant or "parent" self into the "child" or fearful and shy set.

He challenged the audience to bring forth angry thoughts from a stoop-shouldered posture with heads down and mouths slightly open and was rewarded with hearty chuckles when they realized they could not produce the requested feeling in this position.

He also explained that a teacher who adopts the parent self in the classroom forces the students to adopt the child self, the "I'm Not OK—You're OK." Such a situation means that most students are going to react with shyness, acquiescence, or fear. But the speaker added the enforced child self adoption may spark misbehavior on the part of some students who will fight the enforced child self by fighting back with their own parent self.

"They may just question who the hell you are to be telling them what to do," he said.

Helping students become more able decision makers

In a world of easy solutions to difficult problems depicted on television, an obsession with quantity as opposed to quality, lack of support provided by an extended family, and a society that is overwhelmed with things, teaching students to better make decisions becomes a vital mission of the schools.

That was the message of Jimmy Nations, assistant director of curriculum and instruction in the Montgomery County, Md., public schools to more than 200 conferees who gathered to learn specific skills in decision making.

The Maryland educator was careful to point out that he was not as concerned "with teaching students to **make** better decisions as he was with teaching students to **better** make decisions." He stressed the need for improved decision making by reviewing characteristics of the world today which have implications for the kind of world schools should be preparing students to live in. Then he listed four characteristics he sees as making life more difficult by causing overwhelming change:

- Television not only leads young viewers to expect easy, quick solutions to complex problems but robs them of interaction with other children and their families.
- Computers have made accessible an increase in knowledge and information that is weighing individuals down and causing them to think in quantitative rather than qualitative terms. The tendency then: to believe that if something can't be quantified, it is not a valid objective.

• Airplanes and the ease of travel have contributed to making support of the extended family a thing of the past. People are separated today not only by distance but also by age and income which create shifting values with which children must cope.

• A garbage compactor in every kitchen is a token of the mass production that is constantly extending options. As our society produces more, sorting is increasingly complex

Nations, who has taught public school in Florida and at the UCLA Laboratory School, concluded that such a society mandated three things in every successful school program. He listed the process of inquiry, necessitated by the over-abundance of information students now possess; the process of interaction, necessitated by the personal isolation caused by television; and the process of interpretation in terms of meaning and values, which he explained as laying out the spectrum of alternatives and trying to project the end result of those alternatives.

His conslusion: most schools today are not doing a good job on those goals.

Todays' schools — liberating tomorrow's women

Long has the battle raged over whether the double standard is a product of the environment or a misplaced chromosome.

A panel of six attempted through its own experiences to give if not solutions at least suggestions as to the whys and wherefores of the difficulties facing women in the education field. Women find the highest percentage of jobs as primary teachers because, as the panel unanimously agreed, society believes "women identify better with small children."

Male administrators are the majority. Women may become specialists but find themselves specialized even more into the roles of guidance counselors, nurses and home economics instructors.

Virginia Paul of Washington believes that the first change must come from the education system and suggested encounter groups among the faculties. "Teachers need to be sensitive to each other and not avoid the confrontation of male versus female."

Moderator Thelma Spencer, Educational Testing Service, switched the outlook to the way children are forced into roles they then feel obligated to play for the rest of their lives. Referring to a pamphlet, "Look Jane, Look, See Sex Stereotypes," she deplored the lack of girls in auto shop classes and the discouragement of boys as students of home economics. On the bright side for teachers: there are now two women industrial arts teachers in Toledo, Ohio.

A list of sex role stereotypes was presented by Paul who described traits that are sociably desirable for men and women. Agressive, independent, adventurous, self-confident—male characteristics. Gentle, tactful, neat, quiet—female characteristics.

Here we find the "Catch 22"; women's will to fail is contaminated by an urge to avoid success, especially when they have to compete with the male because of the attitude: "I am not supposed to be aggressive." Paul observed, "This double standard of mental health for men and women wastes an enormous amount of time which could be spent with people relating to each other as individuals instead of social objects. No group is so oppressed as one that cannot accept or recognize its own oppression."

Unrestrained hostility greeted the one male panelist, Johnny Clark, Jr., Texas, when he stated that women will never be able to do the things men can do because they are "biologically different." After the catcalls he back-pedaled to "The issue is not whether it's the environment that makes the difference but whether we **want** to change it." However, he did add, "I don't want to change it. I like the idea of seeing them (women) on a satin pillow. By the way, we do have one lady superintendent in Texas."

In summarizing the session, an interesting fact was uncovered close to home involving NEA's UniServ program. According to Mary Leita Christian, NEA director from Michigan, women applying for the jobs are told they are not stable enough because they have families, and, if single, because they are looking forward to having families.

The meeting ended on a positive note with a goal of trying to learn to support each other despite cultural stifling and to further unify rather than maintain antiquated role playing.

It was agreed that a positive move at this convention would be the establishment of a minority and women's guarantee.

Pornography: Spillover in the classroom?

Pornography has indeed spilled over into the classroom, and there is little legal precedent for protecting the teacher who tries to deal with it, a California attorney-panelist noted.

Court cases dealing with the teacher's role in this area are few and limited to specific instances, and courts have given only a glimmer of hope for defense of teachers involved in legal actions based on their attempt to deal with pornography in the classroom, the attorney said.

Stephen Rohde, a Hollywood, Calif., lawyer, covered the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on pornography, the report of the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, and what teachers can do in discussing the subject in the classroom. Rohde's law firm has been involved in most of the major obscenity cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and is currently representing the movie *Deep Throat* in Los Angeles.

The recent Supreme Court decision, he said, finds the court going in one direction while the people are going the other. He used figures from the Presidential commission report to show strong attendance at money-making films such as *Deep Throat*, huge annual profits for magazines such as *Playboy*, and large readership of underground newspapers.

He said the high court decision set out standards and actually helped firms such as his regarding patently offensive material. State laws must specifically describe what material is offensive, he said, but generally states can do what they wish in establishing standards. Rohde said he felt more litigation will result from the decision and that it "put a lot of faith in a jury's ability to determine what is obscene." Now, he said, what is obscene in Tennessee and Mississippi may not be obscene in Las Vegas or New York.

He noted President Nixon had flatly rejected the report by his own 18-member commission which spent two years and more than $2 million. The commission's report indicated erotic material caused little alteration of sexual behavior, has little effect on the attitude of youth toward erotica, has no effect on delinquency or sex crimes, and is a source of information.

Rohde said it was his personal view that exposure to and discussion about pornography and obscene materials is best accomplished with youth through appropriate, well-planned programs in the schools conducted by informed teachers. The report upheld the need for educating the educator.

"Pornography is not the preferred way to learn about sex," he said, "but just because it is not the best, I don't think it is criminal or the reason to subject the purveyor to criminal prosecution."

He said he knows of no court cases in which a teacher has been charged with distribution of pornographic material because of its use in the classroom. Most instances of discipline for such action, he said, have occurred through charges against teachers for being "unfit" and results in their eventual release from their positions.

NEA attorney David Rubin told the group that legal cases suggest there is a measure of constitutional protection from being dismissed when a teacher has not been warned beforehand that such materials may not be used. "But it is not clear at all," he added, "what a teacher can do in this area."

Drugs: Who, what, how, when, where and why?

Drugs: Who, What, How, When, Where, Why? was not a seminar in the usual sense of the word. There was no format, certainly no solutions, and in fact not much agreement on just what the problem was. There was communication though—at first tentative and hesitant but later a real attempt at understanding between two life styles with little in common with one another.

On one side were 45 teachers from around the country, and on the other, five former members in good standing with the drug culture who were brought to Portland in an attempt to explain that culture.

It quickly became apparent that one of the main problems faced by the two groups was the matter of definitions. Just what is a "drug," anyway? Is it, as one asked, tea, coffee, cigarettes, aspirin, or anything else that affects body functions, or should the definition be restricted to substances considered illegal by the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs? It was the same story with definitions of "addiction," "harmful," "dangerous" and "moral." Clearly, the cultural gap was alive and well in Portland.

Even so, the teachers had come to learn and gradually, once the points of reference had been established, the real concerns began to show.

As could be expected, one of the first questions was what can teachers do to solve the problem? Responded one panel member, "Nothing." He explained that, alone, teachers could do nothing, just as alone parents, police, courts, or rehabilitation centers could do nothing. "The problem is society-wide, the logical progression of a species that has known and used drugs of one form or another for thousands of years." The problem—if indeed there is one since there was disagreement on that too—is not **taking** drugs but the **prevalence** of taking drugs, particularly the more recent white, middle-class prevalence of taking drugs, as one minority teacher pointed out.

None of the teachers present said he or she had had any college training to prepare them for dealing with students appearing in class under the influence of drugs. That, and the generally agreed upon fact that more misinformation exists about drugs than practically any other subject, brought out the central concern of the participating teachers: They know little about the drug culture despite the fact they deal daily with students who are a part of it.

Once that fact was established and accepted, the questions came faster and on a different level.

Typical was the teacher who asked, "Are they having a better time than I am?" referring to three youngsters he had seen the night before who were giggling in a restaurant and who, he assumed, were high on something. The answer, incidentally, was an unequivocal "yes . . . and no," from one of the ones experienced in such matters who explained that a reaction to drugs is a highly individual thing that could well cause one person to laugh, another to cry, and another to do nothing at all.

Also brought up was the dilemma of many teachers who are faced with the choice of either turning over a student obviously on drugs to the administration who must in turn refer the matter to the police—or ignore it entirely. Many teachers, according to the group discussion, try to remain aloof to the problem as an alternative to starting a chain reaction that will end with the student in trouble or in jail. There was general agreement that while ignoring the problem is no solution, neither is jail, but teachers alone cannot solve the contradiction.

And so it went, some questions answered, some impossible to answer. Asked about his general reactions, one member of the drug culture group replied with a note of hope: "The people here today are different than the ones I met three years ago. Then, their minds were made up. Now, there is a willingness to listen and try to understand. That is progress."

"Ayer, Ahora Y El Futuro" Bilingual education

How does it feel to sit in a classroom and not understand a single word? "Frustrating! It's like you're in someone else's world and don't belong," remarked one participant after learning the meaning of *ayer*—yesterday, *ahora*—today, *y el futuro*—and tomorrow. She participated as a student in a classroom where the teacher taught in Spanish and she spoke and understood only English.

"That's what a child from another culture and another language feels when entering a first-grade classroom where the teacher speaks in a language foreign to him," Blandina Cardenas, the demonstration teacher and member of the NEA Council on Human Relations, explained. Cardenas said children soon feel alienated, rejected, and look upon themselves and their cultures as inferior. "The treatment and the message communicated cause children to develop a negative self-image that stays with them for years," she added.

Cardenas and a panel of educators agreed that the nation's education system is insensitive to cultural and language differences of the school children with cultural, ethnic, and language different from white, English-speaking children. Panelists placed the blame for this lack of awareness and insensitivity squarely at the feet of the nation's colleges and universities for poor or nonexistent training programs.

The University of Texas received direct criticism for not offering future teachers "a viable bilingual, bicultural education training program" while 20 percent of the state's population is Mexican American. Cardenas said, "Schools do not have the right to put children into compression chambers and purge them of their cultures. Nor should they make them into super Mexicans or super Blacks. Education should be open, human, and sensitive to each child as a human being with special needs." A bilingual, bicultural education can give children the skills to help them deal with the rest of the world.

Panelist Ted Lau, Michigan teacher, said, "There are five million minority children in the United States who need to see school as a concept and not as an uncaring, insensitive place." He told how he had forgotten how to speak effec-

tively in the Korean, Japanese, and Chinese languages because of the exclusive emphasis on English in his education.

Panelist Joe Duncan, a black principal in North Carolina, noted that the mobility of our society makes it almost necessary for students to learn a second language, preferably at an early age.

Jo Allan Tsyitee, a Zuni Indian working with the Southwest Bureau of Indian Affairs, said schools are stripping Indians of their culture and exploiting them for business purposes—particularly the tourist trade. She said, "I've learned I am dirty, a savage, always drunk, and get shot by John Wayne."

Educators at the session were told of the national Bicultural Children's Television Workshop modeled after the popular Sesame Street program. Cris Arce, field director of BCTV, said a federally-funded series of 130 half-hour shows, for children from three to eight years of age, will be televised over the Public Broadcasting System beginning next year. The programs provide children with education experiences of many cultures so that they may discover common bonds between all people. The program, endorsed by NEA, will also concentrate on offering children an opportunity to learn a second language.

Future Shock: How can teachers cope with it?

Cryonics. The megalopolis. Spaceports. Screaming jets. Nuclear blasts on the remote Aleutian island of Amchitka.

A few years ago a scientist named Alvin Toffler wrote a book, *Future Shock*, describing stresses imposed by too much change—primarily technological change—in too short a time. *Future Shock* has been transposed from a 40-minute technicolor film.

The film reports changes that technology has made and is making possible. Transplants are a reality. Artificial man is a real possibility. Rejuvenation surgery, meaning facelifts and lifts elsewhere on the human body, is here. One day we may be able to select, willy nilly, the colors of our skin. Robots duplicate both man's appearance, his actions, and his reactions.

Technology has altered the basic structure of families. As Orson Welles proclaims in one of his quick interpretive sequences in the film, "rapid change places a heavy burden on . . . love." *(Splice: scene of vows being exchanged at gay marriage.)* The young, who now view home as a good place to get away from, experiment with group or corporate marriages. Other young people reject today by returning to yesterday, living in communes, and taking up nearly forgotten trades.

Revolutions are commonplace in religion, in schools, at all levels of society. Women press for equal rights. Anti-war protestors demonstrate. Discovery of the DNA molecule has made it possible to create and to recreate life. Scientists have the capability to change memory processes of human beings. "The world," sonorously declaims an unseen narrator, "will eventually see the genetic equivalent of an arms race."

Is technology always desirable? Change is essential, the film editorializes, but change itself is out of control. The shock of the future demands that we face the consequences of change.

Shots of newborn babies in transparent hospital cribs. Of people selecting the intelligence quotient of their projected baby. Of one helpless infant sprawling on a trackless, sandy beach.

Scarcely do we need Orson Welles to tell us that "The impact of future shock does not depend on the presence of victims. They are everywhere."

Shots of traffic. People jostling one another. Riots. Helmeted police. Family quarrels. More children, racing out of schools and onto playgrounds.

To quote Alvin Toffler, onscreen at last, "If we can begin to think more imaginatively about the future, we can use technology to control the future."

Following the showing of the film a panel of six responded to the question: "Future Shock: How Can Teachers Cope with It?"

Oregon psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Dr. Siegfried Berthelsharf felt that the principal problem created by shock waves of the future is the devaluation they cause—devaluation of self, of others, and of society. "Our best ideas," he remarked, "have their roots in the past." To explore these with students, "teachers must be able to establish meaningful contact with individual students."

Classroom teacher Helen Mason considered the film "a very low level presentation of an excellent book. We should not go down the lane like Pippa, in Robert Browning's poem,

proclaiming 'All's right with the world,' but we must recognize the value of honest understandings of the Ten Commandments and of political processes– so that events like Watergate will not seem so shocking. The task of teachers," confirmed Mason, "is to help students inspect, learn, and analyze situations in which they exist . . . "

Teacher Leonard Anderson stated his belief that one way of coping with future shock is to permit classroom teachers time to establish meaningful relations with students. Added Paul Tanaka, who has chaired NEA's Task Force on Asian-American Affairs, to be able to cope with future shock we "must have some concept of what the future should be." He cautioned teachers that "a valueless scientific program could replace a nation or an entire race." And, "In the haste to advance, we have forgotten about our natural resources," he said, urging teachers to make their students aware of depletions.

Psychiatrist Dr. Edward Scott stated that "Any idea pushed too far becomes ridiculous," and applied this to the central idea of the film. "The normal adolescent," he told teachers, "has two definitions of himself–what he is and what he wants to be. How he goes about resolving the two tells a lot about him."

Many of the issues examined at NEA's first Critical Issues Conference have arisen because of the rapidly changing world in which we live. It is a world in the midst of future shock–the stresses imposed by too much change, too fast. As one teacher so aptly summed up during these days of examination in Portland, "For teachers to be able to cope with future shock we must have some concept of what the future should be." We leave you with this thought to ponder.

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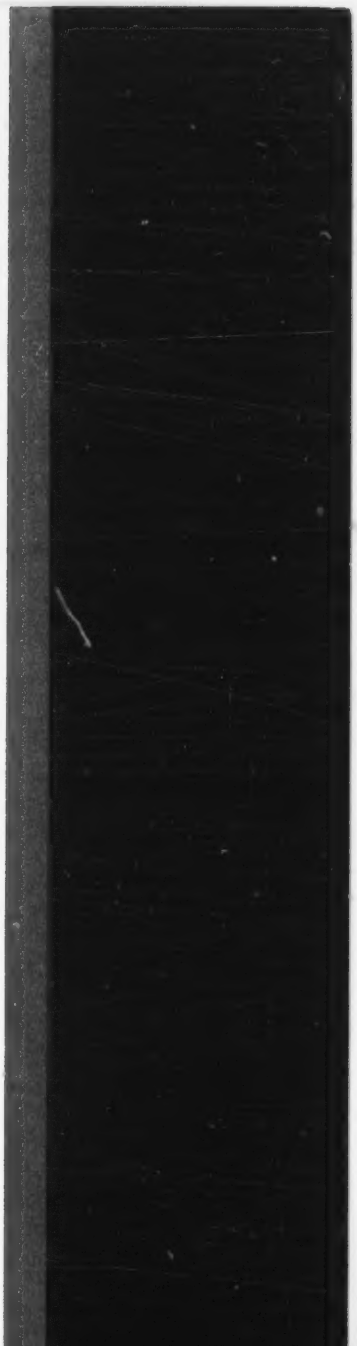

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